

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) A packet switched backplane comprising

a backplane that supports the PICMG 2.16 standard including

a first node slot having a first Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

a second node slot having a second Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets; and

a first aggregation slot having a third Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

a first dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the first and the third Ethernet connectors; and

a second dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the second and the third Ethernet connectors,

wherein the third Ethernet connector allows a switch to turn on and off a communication between the first Ethernet connector and the second Ethernet connector and via the first and second dedicated links.

11. (Previously Presented) The backplane according to claim 10, wherein Ethernet transmit pins of the first and second Ethernet connectors are connected to Ethernet receive pins of the third Ethernet connector, and Ethernet receive pins of the first and second Ethernet connectors are connected to Ethernet transmit pins of the third Ethernet connector.

12. (Previously Presented) The backplane according to claim 10, further comprising

- a second aggregation slot having a fourth Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

- a third dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the first and fourth Ethernet connectors; and

- a fourth dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the second and the fourth Ethernet connectors,

wherein the fourth Ethernet connector allows a switch to turn on and off a communication between the first Ethernet connector and the second Ethernet connector and via the third and fourth dedicated links.

13. (Previously Presented) The backplane according to claim 10 further comprising a fabric slot that comply with PICMG 2.16 standard.

14. (Currently Amended) A data processing system comprising a packet switched backplane having

a backplane that supports the PICMG 2.16 standard including

a first node slot having a first Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

a second node slot having a second Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

a first aggregation slot having a third Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets;

a first dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the first and third Ethernet connectors;

a second dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the second and the third Ethernet connectors; and

a first aggregation card that is pluggable into the first aggregation slot including

a function unit that performs a signal processing function that is not associated with switching Ethernet packets; and

an Ethernet bridging unit that switches Ethernet packets,

wherein the third Ethernet connector allows the Ethernet bridging unit to turn on and off a communication between the first Ethernet connector and the second Ethernet connector and via the first and second dedicated links.

15. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 14 further comprising a first node card that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard and is pluggable into the first node slot.

16. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 15 further comprising a second node card that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard and is pluggable into the second node slot.

17. (Currently Amended) The data processing system according to claim 14 further comprising

at least one second aggregation slot each having a fourth Ethernet connector that complies with the PICMG 2.16 standard for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets[.].

18. (Currently Amended) The data processing system according to claim 17 further comprising at least one second aggregation card that each is pluggable into one of the at least one second aggregation slot and that each includes

a function unit that performs a signal processing function that is not switching Ethernet packets; and

an Ethernet bridging unit that switches Ethernet packets and is for communicating with one of the four Ethernet connectors.

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19. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 18 further comprising a plurality of node cards, wherein each of the plurality of node cards is in communication with two cards from a group of cards that include the first aggregation card and the at least one second aggregation card.

20. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 18 further comprising a plurality of node cards, wherein each card from a group of cards that include the first aggregation card and the at least one second aggregation card is in communication with two of the plurality of node cards.

21. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 14, wherein Ethernet transmit pins of the first and second Ethernet connectors are connected to Ethernet receive pins of the third Ethernet connector, and Ethernet receive pins of the first and second Ethernet connectors are connected to Ethernet transmit pins of the third Ethernet connector.

22. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 14, wherein the first aggregation card further comprises an external Ethernet connector connecting to an external address.

23. (Previously Presented) The data processing system according to claim 22 wherein the Ethernet bridging unit is an Ethernet switch.

24. (New) A packet switched backplane comprising

a backplane employing a packet switched fabric including

a first node slot, having a first Ethernet connector for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets, that complies with the requirements for a node slot in PICMG 2.16 standard;

a second node slot, having a second Ethernet connector for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets, that complies with the requirements for a node slot in PICMG 2.16 standard; and

a first aggregation slot, having a third Ethernet connector for transferring and receiving Ethernet packets, that complies with the requirements for a node slot in PICMG 2.16 standard for selectively receiving one from a source node card, a destination node card, and an aggregation card, wherein the aggregation card includes a node card equipped with an Ethernet bridging unit;

a first dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the first and the third Ethernet connectors; and

a second dedicated link establishing a direct connection between the second and the third Ethernet connectors,

wherein the third Ethernet connector allows a switch to turn on and off a communication between the first Ethernet connector and the second Ethernet connector and via the first and second dedicated links.

25. (New) The packet switched backplane of claim 24, wherein the first dedicated link connects Ethernet transmit pins of the first Ethernet connector to Ethernet

receive pins of the third connector, wherein the second dedicated link connects Ethernet receive pins of the second Ethernet connector to Ethernet transmit pins of the third connector.